

# RECORDING OF PROCEEDINGS

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Wyoming Board of Agriculture Minutes  
July 10, 2006  
Wyoming Department of Agriculture Conference Room

Members Present:

Helen Jones, President  
Spencer Ellis, Vice President  
Lee Otto  
Jim Mickelson  
Gene Hardy  
David Graham  
Jack Corson  
John Etchepare, Director, WY Dept. of Agriculture  
Patrick Zimmerer

Members absent:

David Largent  
Dalin Winters  
Emily Horton  
Paige Smith, Governor Freudenthal's Office  
Frank Galey, Dean, UW College of Agriculture

WDA Staff Present:

Muff Parker, Recording Secretary  
Jim Schwartz, Deputy Director

**Approval of Minutes**

**Helen Jones made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 10, April 26, May 3, May 17, and June 7, 2006 meetings. Seconded by Jim Mickelson. All voted in favor. Motion carried.**

**Conservation District Appointment**

**Gene Hardy made a motion to approve the appointment of Kirk Dana to the urban position of the Star Valley Conservation District. Seconded by Dave Graham. All voted in favor. Motion carried.**

**2007 Water Quality Grant Funding**

The Board reviewed the applications and recommendations approved by the Wyoming Association of Conservation District Board. Jack Corson did question how this project would work on owl Creek if the problem is on the reservations. Jim Schwartz said they are trying to work through that issue. They noted that Shoshoni did not have much of an in-kind match. Jim Michelson said half of the project submitted by Star Valley is in Idaho and wondered if Idaho is participating. Jim Schwartz said they are working together on this. Jack wondered why Star valley doesn't have a mill levy and wondered what the Board could do to encourage them to get one. Presently the County Commissioners are funding the conservation district. When they got to Washakie County's proposal they all noted the different formatting. The information was there, but wasn't easy to find. They requested that all future proposals be submitted in the same format. The Board said they would like to have copies of all interim and final reports on all grant funding. **Jim Mickelson made a motion to approve all grant requests as submitted by WACD. Seconded by Dave Graham. All voted in favor. Motion carried.**

**Issues**

Gene Hardy updated the members on the progress of the plans for the Duncan Ranch.

Helen updated the members on the Living Legacy Dedication Ceremony to be held for following the Board meeting August 18 at State Fair. To date we have received two sponsors for a total of \$2,000. The members decided who would be making the presentations.

### **Composting**

Bryan Grapes joined the Board via phone to brief them on composting. He said there is a facility in Ft. Morgan, Co he would encourage the members to see who is composing dead animals and selling the compost matter to sod companies. He had sent copies of the Guidance for Composting up to the meeting to give to each member. It was an interesting presentation, but the members had several concerns. Some of those are the concern of BSE and the distance to facilities. He recognized those and said CSU is now testing the composting in Ft. Morgan for BSE. He also recognized the distance factor, but said the guidelines for composting he handed out should help each rancher to know how to properly compost on their ranch.

### **Updates/issues**

Jim Schwartz reviewed the tour he, John and staff from the Natural Resources/Policy Section took with BLM and FS personnel recently. The Rawlins Office is becoming an energy office because of the EISs being done. He said there is very little opportunity for stack water. The wild horse numbers are 1300 over AMLs and we need to try and hold them to the AMLs. They may be able to re-gather the 2 areas where the numbers remain over. He said they need to find more money for BLM to be able to get the levels down. They may need from 500,000 to 1,000,000 to be able to comply with the decree. There was an ag representative in the plane during the count, so this is not just a BLM issue. He talked about the increased demand on FS land for recreation. The Smithsfork allotment looks good. They are using a 3-pasture rotation. The Cumberland is a real success story. In Big Piney, the Mountain Pine Beetle is a real issue. The FS feels they need to get a handle on them and are trying to curb the problem through timber sales. He said in Pinedale predators are an issue and are concerned about categorical exclusion. Brucellosis is still a big issue in the area. He feels the environmental groups are using migration corridors to beat up on agriculture. He said the conservation district water quality monitoring is doing well, but because the information gathered is subject to FOYA. Jim also talked about the vacant permits. He said the Jackson FS office has about 90% of the permits vacant – probably because of predators and he feels they really need to be grazed. He also talked about the recently received Attorney General's opinion which says that each predatory animal board must assess the full amount in order to receive funding. In the Lander area, drought is their biggest issue. Bob Ross is the new manager and perhaps he can help. Helen talked about a recent letter she received from the Wyoming Water Development Commission stating they are keeping the open and they are willing to cost share. Jim Schwartz said one of the problems is showing public benefit without having the project on public land. Lisa Reinhart talked about her office and the projects applications they had received – some of which involve the sage grouse. Everyone agreed if it were ever listed it would be worse than the wolf or the grizzly bear. Jim said we need to figure out how to identify the leks without any ramifications to the rancher.

There being no further business, meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

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Spencer Ellis, President

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Date

Attachment:

Attendance sheet

Star Valley request

First page of water quality applications